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ZNR UUUUU ZZH
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FM AMEMBASSY BEIJING
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9757
INFO RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 6414
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 2281
RUEHCN/AMCONSUL CHENGDU 9409
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 0627
RUEHGH/AMCONSUL SHANGHAI 9373
RUEHSH/AMCONSUL SHENYANG 9071
RUEHGZ/AMCONSUL GUANGZHOU 4317
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 3859
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 0862
RUEHIN/AIT TAIPEI 7060
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2064
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC

UNCLAS BEIJING 003458

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STATE ALSO PASS TO USAID/ODP
USAID/W FOR DCHA/OFDA ACONVERY, PMORRIS, RTHAYER
USAID/ASIA FOR CJENNINGS
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NEW YORK FOR FSHANKS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: CHINA OFFERS OFFICIAL DONATION FOR HURRICANE GUSTAV RELIEF

REF: A) Beijing 3054 B) Beijing 2410 C) Beijing 1848

¶1. (U) Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) North America and Oceania Division Director General ZHENG Zequang called the DCM September 5 to inform us that the Government of the People's Republic of China has decided, as an expression of sympathy and support to the government and people of the United States, to provide a USD 100,000 cash donation to the USG following the damage inflicted by Hurricane Gustav and to alleviate victims' suffering caused by the event.

¶2. (U) Zheng separately said the Chinese Red Cross also has decided to donate USD 50,000 to the American Red Cross for Gustav relief efforts, as an expression of similar sentiments.

¶3. (U) Zheng further stated that the gesture of these donations reflects genuine feelings of sympathy, and that it is done in the spirit of mutual support for our common effort to confront natural disasters.

¶4. (U) According to Zheng, the Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) will handle the government-to-government transfer of funds. Post is currently in contact with MOFCOM and will report any additional details related to this transaction.

¶5. (U) NOTE: Earlier in the week, Ambassador Randt sent to Foreign Minister YANG Jiechi a condolence letter expressing sympathy for the August 30 earthquake disaster near Panzhihua, along the Sichuan-Yunnan border. In May and June of this year, the USG contributed a combined USD 4.9 million, and the American Red Cross donated USD 10 million toward relief efforts for the 7.9 magnitude May 12 Sichuan earthquake disaster (REFTELS). In September 2005, in response to Hurricane Katrina, the Chinese government donated USD 5.1 million in cash, plus tents, generators, and bedding, toward relief efforts. Previous to that, the Chinese government had played an active role in relief efforts within the Asian region in the aftermath of the December 2004 tsunami; however, the Katrina donation marked the first time the GoC made a significant donation to the USG to assist with natural disaster relief. END NOTE.

RANDT